



DONALD L. WOLFE, Director

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

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IN REPLY PLEASE

REFER TO FILE: **WM-6**

June 1, 2006

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**SAN GABRIEL RIVER CORRIDOR MASTER PLAN AND
PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
AUTHORITY TO PROCEED
SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICTS 1, 4, AND 5
3 VOTES**

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:

1. Adopt the San Gabriel River Corridor Master Plan.
2. Certify that the final Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for the San Gabriel River Corridor Master Plan (Master Plan) has been completed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the State and County guidelines related thereto and reflects the independent judgment and analysis of the County; find that the final PEIR was presented to the Board and the Board has reviewed and considered the information contained therein prior to approving the Master Plan; determine that the significant adverse effects of the Master Plan have been reduced to an acceptable level as outlined in the enclosed Findings of Fact for the Master Plan, which findings are adopted and incorporated herein by reference; and adopt the enclosed Programmatic Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, finding that, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21081.6, the Programmatic Mitigation Monitoring

and Reporting Program is adequately designed to ensure compliance with the required mitigation measures during project implementation.

3. Authorize the Director of Public Works to submit \$875 to the County Clerk for payment of the required processing fee and Fish and Game filing fee concurrent with the filing and processing of a Notice of Determination for the Master Plan.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

On September 7, 1999, Synopsis No. 18, your Board instructed the Director of Public Works, in conjunction with the Directors of Parks and Recreation and Regional Planning, to prepare a Master Plan. To develop the Master Plan, Public Works established a Steering Committee composed of cities adjacent to the river; other public agencies; water, community, and environmental groups.

The Master Plan that emerged from this stakeholder driven process integrates over 130 projects that meet the Steering Committee's goal to enhance habitat, recreation, open space, flood protection, water supply and quality, and economic development. In addition, it includes descriptions of programs and guidelines that may be developed in the future to continue to improve the San Gabriel River for the public's use and enjoyment.

Pursuant to CEQA, a public agency must consider the environmental impacts of a project prior to its approval. The Master Plan is a project that is subject to the requirements of CEQA. Therefore, a PEIR was prepared to consider the environmental impacts, mitigation measures, and alternatives of the Master Plan on a program level.

A fee must be paid to the Fish and Game when certain notices, required by CEQA, are filed with the County Clerk. Public Works will submit \$850 to the County Clerk for this fee, in addition to a \$25 processing fee, when the Notice of Determination is filed.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

This action is consistent with the County Strategic Plan Goal of Service Excellence. Adoption of the Master Plan and approval of the final PEIR will facilitate processes as the Flood Control District and other stakeholders start implementing projects described in the Master Plan, which will provide for a better quality of life for the citizens of the County.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

Funding for the Fish and Game and Notice of Determination filing fees in the amount of \$875 is included in the Fiscal Year 2005-06 Flood Control District funds. Individual projects will be funded separately by various project proponents. For projects in which Public Works is lead agency, we will return to your Board for approval of construction contracts that will be advertised for each of the projects in the future. Public Works will also work with other agencies to obtain grants and other sources of funds for projects.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The Master Plan is an overall conceptual plan that focuses primarily on developing the river corridor to enhance habitat, provide recreational benefits, and protect open space while maintaining and enhancing flood protection and water resources. Additionally, the Master Plan is consistent with the applicable goals and policies set forth in the Los Angeles County General Plan.

The PEIR was prepared in compliance with CEQA. The purpose of the PEIR is to disclose the significant or potentially significant environmental effects of implementing the Master Plan, to identify possible ways to avoid or reduce those impacts, and to describe reasonable alternatives of the Master Plan. As projects identified in the Master Plan are proposed for implementation in the future, their sponsors will examine each project in light of the PEIR to determine what additional project-level environmental document must be prepared. The data on existing conditions and the programmatic analyses and mitigation measures presented in the PEIR will then serve as a source of background information and model to guide further project-level CEQA review.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

Public Works issued a Notice of Preparation for the PEIR in April 2003 and circulated it for a period of 30 days pursuant to State CEQA guidelines, Section 15082. Twenty written statements were received by Public Works in response to the Notice of Preparation. Additionally, a public scoping meeting for the project was held at Public Works headquarters in Alhambra on May 12, 2003. Oral comments were received at the meeting.

A draft PEIR was completed and released for public review on March 3, 2005. The draft PEIR identified significant environmental effects of the project in the areas of air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous

materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and mineral resources, noise, public services and utilities, recreation, and transportation and traffic.

Public Works initiated a 60-day public comment period by filing a Notice of Completion and a Notice of Availability with the State Office of Planning and Research. Pursuant to Section 21092 of the Public Resources Code, public notice of the draft PEIR was published in the *San Gabriel Valley Tribune*, *Whittier Daily News*, *Long Beach Press Telegram*, and *Seal Beach Sun* on March 11 and April 1, 2005. Copies of the draft PEIR and the Master Plan were also available for review at the Arcadia; Azusa; Baldwin Park; Clifton M. Brakensiek; Cerritos; Downey; Duarte; El Monte; Irwindale; George Nye, Jr.; La Puente; Long Beach; Los Alamitos – Ross Moor; Norwalk; Pico Rivera; Santa Fe Springs; Mary Wilson – Seal Beach; South El Monte; and Whittier Libraries and on the internet at www.sangabrielriver.com. Copies were also sent to the State Clearinghouse.

The public review period lasted for 60 days from March 3 through May 5, 2005. During that period, comments were received from two private residents and 22 public agencies and organizations: State of California Department of Conservation; State of California Department of Transportation; State of California Department of Fish and Game; San Gabriel River Water Master; Southern Council of Conservation Clubs, Inc.; Cities of Cerritos, Santa Fe Springs, and Seal Beach; San Gabriel River Water Committee; San Gabriel Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District; Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster; Puente Hills Landfill Native Habitat Preservation Authority; Fly Fishers Club of Orange County; Southern California Edison; County of Orange – Resources and Development Management Department; Central Basin Municipal Water District; United Rock Products Corporation; Metropolitan Water District of Southern California; Law Offices of Susan M. Trager; Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County; Vulcan Materials Company; and Southern California Association of Governments. Written responses to these comments are included in the final PEIR.

Public Works prepared the final PEIR and, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21092.5, provided copies of the responses to comments and the final PEIR to all commenting agencies.

The final PEIR analyzes the feasible mitigation measures necessary to avoid or substantially lessen the project's potential environmental impacts and a range of feasible alternatives capable of eliminating or reducing these effects in accordance with CEQA and the State CEQA guidelines.

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The final PEIR concludes that all of the potentially significant impacts of the project can be eliminated or mitigated to below a level of significance with the imposition of feasible mitigation measures.

We have prepared the enclosed Programmatic Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program as required by State CEQA guidelines, Section 15097, which includes maintaining records to ensure compliance with environmental mitigation measures adopted as part of this project.

A Notice of Determination in accordance with the requirements of Section 21152(a) of the Public Resources Code will be filed within five working days after your Board's approval of the Master Plan.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

The project will not have a significant impact on current services or projects currently planned.

CONCLUSION

Please return three adopted copies of this letter to Public Works.

Respectfully submitted,

DONALD L. WOLFE
Director of Public Works

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Enc.

cc: Chief Administrative Office
County Counsel